

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

#### **Listing of claims:**

1-8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[8]] 45, wherein the measuring step comprises exposing said sample to a composition comprising said an antibody is a monoclonal antibody which ~~that~~ specifically binds ~~unprocessed~~ VEGF-D.

10. (Currently amended) The method according to [[8]] 9, wherein said antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

11. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[8]] 9, wherein said antibody includes a detectable label.

12. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[8]] 45, wherein said neoplastic disease is selected from the group consisting of malignant melanoma, breast ductal carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, prostate cancer and endometrial cancer.

13. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[8]] 46, wherein said sample is a human tissue sample.

14-40. (Canceled)

41. (Currently amended) The method according to claim [[40]] 46, wherein said ~~tissue~~ sample is comprises a lymph node ~~from tissue surrounding said neoplastic growth.~~

42-44. (Canceled)

45. (New) A method of diagnosing growth characteristics of a neoplastic disease in an organism, the method comprising:

- (a) obtaining a sample from an organism with a neoplastic disease;
- (b) measuring amount and size of VEGF-D polypeptide in said sample;

and

(c) diagnosing growth characteristics of the neoplastic disease from the amount and size of the VEGF-D measured in step (b), wherein increased unprocessed VEGF-D in said sample correlates with increased tumor growth or metastatic risk.

46. (New) The method according to claim 45, wherein said sample is selected from the group consisting of tissue, blood, serum, plasma, urine, ascities fluid and pleural effusion.

47. (New) The method according to claim 46, wherein said sample comprises endothelial cells.